

Miscellany.

THE DASHFORD TRAGEDY.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

Dashford had a sensation, and it was so new a thing that all the village was agog—with ears to hear of, and eyes to view the object.

Everybody in the place probably, who could read, had read the name on the books of the Red Mug—Charles Wylie, New York City.

The Red Mug was the centre of attraction.—The landlord could not recall the time when he had so much company—certainly not since the days of the old regimental masters—or the time when six stages stopped over night at his house before the railway abomination had sprung into existence.

The Red Mug was kept open more from the force of habit than from any necessity of a public house at Dashford. Not once a noon did Landlord Stark have a guest to dinner, and it had been so long since the best bed had been slept in, that the very day of Mr. Wylie's arrival Dame Stark had caused it to be transported to the top of the wood pile for air, and she had spent the best part of the forenoon beating it with a bean-pole.

And when the depot carriage drove up to the door, and Mr. Wylie, portmanteau in hand, alighted, Dame Stark was wont to declare the sight of him took all the strength out of her, when she remembered that there was bread pudding for dinner, and not a spoonful of preserves in the house.

But the stranger soon set her mind at rest by ordering crakers and milk for his dinner—and he did not require the feather bed at all; he preferred the mattress.

When it was known that there was a stranger in their midst, the Dashford people lost no time in commencing investigating into his habits and business. The landlord was questioned, and the facts elicited that he rose at seven, drank a glass of ale or porter, and sat on the verandah and smoked.

The landlady knew that he had a dozen very fine linen shirts; that he wore gold studs—used otto of roses on his handkerchief, and never wiped twice on the same towel. The chambermaid—who was young and pretty—knew that he had a pleasant voice, and very soft hands, though how she ascertained the last fact does not appear.

The young ladies of Dashford were all taken with an astonishing liking for the society of Dame Stark. What a multitude of excuses they made for calling. One wanted a recipe for dying ribbons—another wanted the pattern of her cap for mother, and another called to see the litter of white kittens over which the great white cat purred so untiringly in the great basket under the kitchen table.

You know that young ladies are prone to little harmless deceptions of this sort, the world over. Sometimes they saw Mr. Wylie, and the most glowing accounts were given of him. From all the facts that could be gathered, it would appear that he was about thirty years of age—rather tall and slender, with regular features—brown eyes and hair, and a cheery beard. And besides he had a haughty air—a disinclination to sociality, and a liking for a pretty foot.

Melinda Brown, the very boldest of the young ladies, gave a party, and invited Mr. Wylie. It would be so much pleasanter for him to make some acquaintance, she said. Many people thought he would not accept the invitation, but he did so, and was the life of the party.

He charmed every one. His manners were polished, so free from all affectation, and he understood how to adapt himself to the taste of each one in whom he came in contact.

It was ascertained that he purposed remaining in Dashford, and that he was about opening an office in the front room of the Red Mug. He was a physician, of five years' experience, and had come here for the purpose of practising his profession.

After his sign was put out, it was positively alarming to observe how unhealthy Dashford suddenly became. Hitherto people, for the most part, had died either by accidents or from old age—but now the entire female community had gone ill. Coughs, colds, nervous diseases, fevers, and disordered livers were the rule, and not the exception.

Dr. Wylie was kept riding for the greater part of the time, and the principal wonder was when the poor fellow contrived to obtain any sleep.

He was an immense favorite with the ladies both old and young. He had such sad eyes when his countenance was at rest that they were sure he must have some secret trouble—and there is no surer method for a man to make himself interesting than to give people the impression that he is bearing in silence some great sorrow.

Though polite and courteous to all, Dr. Wylie was not long in making his selection—and it did infinite credit to his good taste.

Lucy Walbridge was by far the sweetest girl in Dashford. She was about twenty-five years of age—an orphan and an heiress, and resided with her uncle, Squire Hillman, at the Hall.

And Squire Hillman's wife was obligingly taken sick of a slow fever, which gave the doctor an excellent excuse for tying his roan horse, every day, to the great elm in front of the Squire's.

We are not writing a love story, so we will pass over the courtship. For once, the course of true love seemed to run smooth. There was no obstacles to surmount—both parties were of an age to marry—and there were no friends to raise objections.

It was in July that Dr. Wylie came to Dashford, and his wedding day was set for the 15th of March.

It came all too soon, Lucy thought, for surely nothing could be more delightful than the charmed life they were leading. She almost feared marriage might break the sweet enchantment.

The day was clear and cloudless—altogether unlike the days March usually gives us—and in the morning the first blizzard sang gaily in the old elm which reached its branches almost in at Lucy's window.

Dr. Wylie made all his business calls—for the sick must be attended to—and on his way to his hotel, he stopped at the Hall, in defiance of all etiquette, to kiss Lucy and bid her keep up her courage.

He ate his supper with Mrs. Stark, at six—and then went to his room to dress. The ceremony was to take place at eight, and as soon as she could leave the china to Kate, Mrs. Stark crept to the parlor and sat down by the window to get a glimpse of the Doctor when he came down in his wedding garments. For three whole hours she sat there—but he did not appear, and at last she was reluctantly forced to the conclusion that he had got dressed, and gone while she was seeing that careless Kate did not injure the china, which had descended to her from her grandmother and which was very highly prized as an heirloom.

The old tall clock struck nine slowly and deliberately—and just as the last stroke fell, one of Squire Hillman's servants came riding to the inn in great haste.

Dame Stark ran out—sure that some one was dying, and the doctor was wanted—forgetting all about the wedding for the moment.

"Good land!" cried she, "who's took now?"

"Nobody," said the man; "who's took, except Miss Lucy, which was going to be married to him, and he never came, and she's took with the high-strikes the worst kind! And the Squire, he's swearing like mad, and he's a member of the church, marm, and a speaker at meetings, and voting he'll cowhide him within an inch of his

life! And the mistress, she sent me off to see what the matter was, and bring him, whether or no! She says folks ought to know enough not to be took sick on the night which is the doctor's wedding night, and that's my own opinion, marm."

"Good land!" cried Dame Stark. "So he hasn't come to be married? Has he? Well, I couldn't think how he managed to get out without my seeing of him. Mayhap the poor gentleman has fell asleep—he's broke of his rest so 'nights, it would be no wonder. Here, Jim, you run up to Dr. Wylie's room, and tell him that it's time for him to go and be married!"

The shock-headed hostler crept off up the stairs and five minutes afterward he came rushing back, his face pale as death, his eyes starting from their sockets, and his huge frame trembling in every limb.

"He's dead as a door nail!" he cried, "and a laying sopped in his own blood!"

The servant from the Hall, Mrs. Stark, the landlord, and a couple of loungers, all rushed up to the chamber, and found that Jim's words were too true.

Dr. Wylie was lying on the floor on his face, having evidently been stabbed in the back while sitting in a chair before the mirror.

Trace of the murderer there was none, except that on the sill of the open window behind the dead man, there was the print of two bloody fingers!

Underneath the window, which was only nine feet from the ground, was a thick bed of sage, which had been covered up from the winter's cold in hemlock boughs to the depth of some feet, and if the murderer had escaped by the window, the hemlock gave no footprints.

The news spread like wildfire, and reached the Hall even before the servant could return to communicate it. Poor Lucy was carried to her chamber in delirium; and the Squire, who was also the Coroner, set forth for the Red Mug to attend the inquest which had been called.

The inquest, like most other investigations of that kind, elicited nothing new—and after the lapse of three days the body of Dr. Wylie was placed in Squire Hillman's family vault to await the pleasure of his relatives in New York, who were at once written to.

As is usual in such cases, public indignation ran very high. Every one was anxious to convict the real assassin, that the vengeance might be swift and sure.

Dr. Wylie's brother offered a reward of five hundred dollars for the discovery and apprehension of the murderer; Dashford, not to be behind in the good work, offered a like amount.

The offered rewards brought their fruit. Isaac Smith, a laborer, employed at intervals about the Red Mug, came before a justice and stated that, on the evening of the murder, about eight o'clock he had met Clyde Irving—a young mechanic—coming in great haste from the direction of the garden at the Red Mug. He had bid good evening—a salutation which was briefly responded to.

Irving had appeared to be powerfully agitated from some cause, and anxious to escape.—The next morning, feeling curious, with the rest about the murder and everything connected with it, Mr. Smith had been over the garden, and on looking beneath the hemlock which covered the sage bed, he had found a small, exceedingly sharp chisel, bearing on the handle the name of Clyde Irving. The instrument was rusty and stained with blood as he exhibited it to the justice—and the finding of this weapon recalled the fact that, at the post mortem examination, the surgeon had expressed it as his opinion that the fatal wound had not been made by a knife, but by some other sharp pointed instrument.

Clyde Irving was of irreproachable habits, poor but honest, temperate and virtuous—and the only son of a widowed mother. It was well known in Dashford that he had loved Lucy Walbridge from childhood, but that he had never spoken to her on the subject, because his station in life was so much below hers.

You all know how readily people find reasons for the truth of what they desire to believe. Irving had not an enemy in the village—but still it was necessary to have some one on whom to throw the guilt, and they were all glad that the murderer had been discovered.

A score of other trifling circumstances were against the unfortunate young man, and he was arrested, tried and convicted of the murder of Charles Wylie, on the evening of the 15th of March.

Lucy, who had in a measure recovered from the shock she had received on the death of her expected husband, protested against the course events were taking. She was morally sure that Irving was innocent of the crime charged upon him, and if the law convicted him unto death, it would slay one who was wholly guiltless.

It did so convict him, and the terrible sentence passed upon him—to take effect on the 10th day of June following.

After the decision was known to be final, Lucy Walbridge sunk into a profound melancholy, from which nothing could rouse her, and at times her friends despaired of her reason.

On the fatal 10th of June, Dashford was overrun with people. The execution was to take place in the open space in front of the jail—the time 11 o'clock.

Just before the hour, Irving was led forth, and with a firm, quiet manner ascended the scaffold. His face was pale, but serene—the calm blue eyes met the gaze of the vast multitude without shrinking, and the broad white forehead lifted itself to the soft south wind as honestly and proudly as the brow of the noblest man among them all.

He was asked if he had anything to say—but he simply shook his head, and the black cap was drawn over his eyes.

The Sheriff took the rope—but before he could place it about his neck, a tall, gaunt woman, clothed in black, stepped forward, lifted a bony white hand, and uttered the single word—

"Forswear!"

The Sheriff dropped the rope—something in the air and manner of the woman commanded obedience. Silence fell upon the assemblage—silence which was almost audible. The woman dropped the hood of her cloak upon her shoulders, and revealed a pale, haggard face—lit up by brilliant black eyes, and framed in masses of hair white as snow.

"Listen to me," she said, in the low, thrilling voice which reached the ear of every person present—"listen to me, and witness ye every one that, before God, I avow my words to be the truth! Clyde Irving is innocent of the crime you charge him with! You all ought to feel sure of it after looking into his face. It is not the countenance of a murderer.

"Three years ago I was left a widow. My name is Catherine Sinclair. My home is in New York. When my husband died, all the affections of my husband died, all the affections of my heart centered in my child—a beautiful Alice, then seventeen years of age, and the loveliest creature the sun ever shone upon. She was my all, and I loved her with a passion which was almost madness. Alas! until he came, Charles Wylie, with his fair, handsome face and his smile which might have won an angel to sin. Alice sewed for a daughter of one of his friends, and there he became acquainted with her. She was fascinated, poor girl! and nothing I could say had any effect. She confided in him, trusted him entirely; and it was the old story over again. He offered her marriage—lured her under that promise to a neighboring city, and there compassed her ruin. After a few days he left her—basely deserted her—and left her without money, to take her choice—starvation or a life of sin. Thank God that she preferred death.

"He returned to New York to seek another victim, and on the very night that he was playing

the gay gallant to a fashionable French actress, my child buried herself and her sin beneath the dark water of a friendly stream! Over the dead body which they brought home to me I swore an oath—that before Charles Wylie should marry any woman he should taste death! I have kept the oath. With this hand I murdered him—striking the blow with a chisel I obtained at Clyde Irving's shop, where I called to make some trifling inquiry. He deserved death! I think God, who knows every tried and tempted heart, will judge me leniently. Oh, my soul shudders when I remember the hearts he has desolated—the hearths he has laid waste—for my Alice was only one of many victims!

"I killed him and escaped through the window. In leaving the garden I saw Clyde Irving there—I think for some reason, he had a distrust of me; but as there was nothing to confirm it, he kept it to himself."

She paused, but though all present believed her story, not a man of them lifted a hand to deprive her of freedom.

The Sheriff unbowed Clyde, and allowed him to descend the scaffold. He was at liberty.

At last, one of the constables approached Mrs. Sinclair, who with bowed face was leaning against the railing of the scaffold.

She lifted her head, divining his purpose, and waived him back.

"The law has no power over the dead," she said hoarsely. "I am free!"

Even as she spoke her lips grew purple—she tottered and fell forward! And before they reached her she was lifeless.

An examination after death proved that she had swallowed strychnine—and they buried her and her sins together in the village churchyard.

Two years afterward, Clyde Irving married Lucy Walbridge.

A down east cotemporary advocates the establishment of seminaries for young ladies where epinology, knittology, weaving, cookology, &c., can be taught, the graduates to receive the degree of F. F. W., or fit for wives.

Medical.

TO THE AFFLICTED.

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They treat successfully, on a new method, all diseases of the EYE and EAR. They have had more extensive practice, and better success in the treatment of all

DISEASES OF WOMEN,
Than any other Physicians in America. They have cured women who have been confined to their bed for years.—They never fail to cure

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In all stages; no matter of how long standing. They cure ASTHMA, so it never returns. They have a sure cure for the distressing disease, HEMORRHOIDS, OR PILES. They cure all Diseases of the Throat and Lungs.

CANCERS.—They have had an extensive practice and wonderful success in the treatment of cancers, which they cure without cutting them out or using the knife. Let those who have Tumors or Swellings, or a red spot lose no time in having it attended to, as a timely treatment may save them from the horrors, suffering and death of an open cancer.

CATARH CURED.—They are treating catarrh on a new system, which is a sure cure for this disease.

THEIR CONSULTATIONS for years have averaged from five to seven thousand a year, which gives them an experience unsurpassed by any, and equalled only by a few.

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IT EXCELS ALL OTHER RESTORATIVES!

As it will not gum the hair, stain the skin, nor soil the finest fabric, and is free from the disagreeable odor of sulphur.

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Richly perfumed, it is unsurpassed; cooling and refreshing to the scalp.

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Solely

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Is it the stomach?

Is it the bowels?

Is it the lungs?

Is it the kidneys?

Is it the bladder?

Is it the prostate?

Is it the testicles?

Is it the uterus?

Is it the ovaries?

Is it the vagina?

Is it the cervix?

Is it the perineum?

Is it the rectum?

Is it the sigmoid?

Is it the anus?

Is it the colon?

Is it the small?

Is it the large?

Is it the duodenum?

Is it the jejunum?

Is it the ileum?

Is it the cecum?

Is it the appendix?

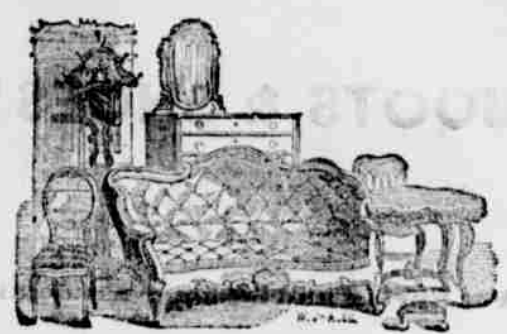
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Of all kinds, common painted to very fine old walnut with marble tops; also

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On hand or made to order. We have a very large assortment of

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Upon which we defy competition.

Looking Glass Plates

Of all sizes cut to fit frames of any kind. All kinds of

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Made to order on short notice. We also invite attention to our facilities for

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